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28 January 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Vice President

SUBJECT : The Security Situation in Italy

1. The security situation in Italy has declined steadily in recent years, reflecting an increase in both politically motivated violence and in common crime, such as kidnapping and robbery. In 1975, for example, there were more than 60 kidnappings for ransom, an increase of about 50 percent compared to the previous year. Many of the victims were prominent and wealthy. The most notable recent example was the abduction of a member of the Agnelli family last November.

2. Italian authorities have not had much success in dealing with the situation, although they have been able to shield official visitors from incidents. A particularly dramatic outbreak of violence in mid-1975 led to the passage of two laws--one broadening police powers and the other requiring registration of all firearms--but it is too early to assess the effectiveness of the new measures.

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